

Richard Casolla
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Home Care Worker
In support of bill 5433

My name is Richard Casolla and I've been a home care worker for 5 years. My consumer and I are caught in a catch-22 right now. I care for a very good friend and she even lives with me, so that means if she needs me at 3am. She has the maximum amount of benefits, so I could be getting paid for the full 40 hours of home care he is allotted, but because he can't afford to pay for workman's comp for me out of his own pocket, I can't actually get paid for 40 hours. So he's not getting to use the services he has, and I'm not getting paid for the work I do. I'm only paid for 25 hours, even though I work all the time because my consumer lives with me. Obviously, I care a lot about him, but this is also how I learn my living and he should get the care he needs. In our situation the system isn't working for the worker or the consumer.

I think so many things could be fixed if you, our lawmakers knew what it was like for us and the people we care for. We're in this together and we all want our home care system to work for all of us, but it just isn't right now. If we could negotiate for something as simple as workman's comp insurance I could work 40 hours a week and my friend would get the care he needs and has been given by the state.

I want to be paid for the work I do and I don't think that's asking too much. And I need health insurance, just like everyone else. In my case, the resources are already there, it's a matter of making the system work for the people it is meant to help.